

## THE HEALTH BILL.

Lord MORPETH has been led to curtail his Health Bill very considerably for the present session. His lordship proposes now,—To confine the positive application of the Bill to the country corporate towns in England and Wales, to those towns which are the subject of the Municipal Corporations Act, and have already the regularly constituted bodies to which these new powers and functions can be applied. To allow other towns in the country to apply for the use of the same powers on a petition to the Privy Council from a majority of the rated inhabitants. To dispense in such cases with the provision that the Crown should nominate one-third of the commissioners. To have a separate Bill for the metropolis. With respect to gas works, to give the councils or commissioners power to construct them in places where no gas companies already exist, and to contract with companies where they do exist. To enable the councils or commissioners to construct water-works where no water companies exist; to contract with them where they do; and further, if they shall be so advised and authorized by a government inspector, to purchase them compulsorily; the value of the property purchased to be estimated in the same manner as under the Land Clauses Consolidation Act, but enabling the purchasers to pay a fair dividend on the value so estimated to the proprietors. Lord Morpeth said, when he gave notice of this change, that in a future session there would be more leisure to deal with the remaining portion of the subject, and with a better chance of success. It is to be hoped that no further concession will be made.

Some time since Mr. Bardwell, architect, addressed a letter to Lord Morpeth on this subject, urging that the bill should contain clauses to the following effect:—

1. Enforcing strict cleanliness in the streets, and the diurnal removal of all decomposing animal and vegetable matters.
2. Preventing shopkeepers sweeping the dust and refuse of their shops into the streets.
3. Prohibiting all privies, and compelling the provision of water-closets instead. In the city, where no excuse can be made for such abominations, they prevail to a greater extent perhaps, than in any other district.
4. Suppressing lay-stalls, and all places of the kind, within a circuit of three miles from the cathedral church of St. Paul.
5. Removing noxious trades from the metropolis, particularly the increasing nuisance of coke-ovens.
6. Prohibiting cattle markets, and the slaughtering of cattle within three miles of Somerset House.
7. Prohibiting the throwing of filth of any description into the river, whether thrown from the land or from shipping. This was prohibited by enactment as early as temp. Henry VIII.
8. Providing intercepting sewers and receptacles under one direction, and on a well-digested plan. The projected companies will only partially remedy the evil of filth entering the river, as they only take those parts where the intercepting sewers will be the least expensive.
9. Trapping the gully-holes, and providing for the destruction of the noxious gases generated in the sewers.
10. Prohibiting all intra-mural interments of the dead, and providing proper and convenient places for the burial of corpses with decency, solemnity, or splendour.
11. Prohibiting the farther encroachment of buildings on all open spaces within the metropolis.
12. Providing that all graveyards be kept as open spaces in perpetuity, and erecting a large cross or some suitable monument therein, with an inscription, shewing that the dust of the buried dead from A.D. 1620 (or whatever time the graveyard was formed) to A.D. 1850 resteth here.
13. Providing for the gradual destruction of courts and alleys, and in lieu thereof, building fire-proof houses five or six stories high, as dwellings for the poor. Such houses to have open spaces around them, planted with trees. I have shewn, by publicly exhibited plans, that a larger population may be healthfully located on a given space than is now lodged in the present health-destroying tenements.

14. The perfect and entire separation of large parishes into smaller ones, so as to secure the effectual classification and supervision of the inhabitants by the parochial authorities.

15. And then, in accordance with that beautiful arrangement of nature, by which the rejected parts of animal life become the food of plants, and the excretions of plants necessary for the healthy condition of man, I would plant out every extinct graveyard and open space as thickly as possible with trees and shrubs, and minor plants, so as to provide the lungs of those unfortunates who are compelled to breathe the contaminated air of London year after year with a little oxygen; the want of which the alarming increase of bronchitis so painfully demonstrates.

Encouragement should also be given to plans for the erection of houses with flat roofs, so that a luxuriant growth of plants in pots and boxes may be obtained. I have over and over again shewn the necessity for these things, because in consequence of the great spread of buildings around London, the supply of pure air is yearly lessened. Young life can scarcely be supported, and the mortality of infants has increased to 80 per cent. How beautiful were the cities of old! superb foliage and flowers were waving on every side. Jonah went into Nineveh, a day's journey. Imperial Rome never contained much more than a million of souls, yet its sanitary precautions were such as we cannot hope to realize for many generations.

16. Encouraging plans for the prevention of smoke; for the better ventilation and warming of dwelling-houses; for making dwelling-houses fire-proof, and compelling the fire-proofing of inns, hotels, and all houses of public entertainment.

17. The removal of the mud-banks which now disfigure the sides of the river, and from whence the most noxious exhalations are constantly arising.

The machinery and means by which the foregoing objects may be accomplished are,—The appointment of a sanitary office or board with proper officers attached.

The profits on cemeteries, until the expenses of forming such places are defrayed. The rent of manure-tanks.

A rate of a penny or two-pence in the pound on all rateable property in the metropolis.

## NOXIOUS GASES FROM SEWERS.

MR. EDITOR.—The plan of your correspondent "C. B." for rendering innocuous "the principal gas which is generated by sewage-matter," is well worthy of consideration. But it may be doubted whether "a solution of chlorine," alone, be capable of decomposing all the unpleasant emanations from sewers; and whether so few emissaries as the few spacious junctions of our streets now afford, would give sufficient ventilation in the main sewers, as to permit inspectors and workmen to enter and work in them when they may be required so to do.

I beg to ask also in what kind of vessel does your correspondent propose to place the "solution of chlorine," and by what method is it to be changed when it shall have become inert? And more especially, how he would ensure the passage through the chlorine of the whole emanation of sewers? For should much pass out unpurified, it would be very annoying to the inhabitants near the ornamental lamp-posts, which it is proposed these emissaries might also serve for, and I fear that lamps would not burn with brilliancy, in such an atmosphere as these lamp-posts would probably be surrounded with.

I shall be sorry, however, if the above observations repress any attempt at removing the nuisance in question, or a due consideration of the suggestions of your ingenious correspondent "C. B."—I am, Sir, &c.

May 10th.

W. BRONET.

[We may here, too, for our own part, call the attention of our correspondent, "C. B." to the fact, that chlorine will not deprive sulphuretted hydrogen of its sulphur, leaving the hydrogen to escape, but will, on the contrary, deprive it of its hydrogen, leaving the sulphur to fall or precipitate. Chlorine has been often used for the neutralization of the noxious smell and poisonous properties of sulphuretted hydrogen, but if it had united

with the sulphur instead of the hydrogen of this noxious gas, the consequence would have been the production of the highly volatile, irritating, and noxious, chloride of sulphur; a substance only second to sulphuretted hydrogen itself perhaps,—in abominable odour at least, if not too in noxious properties. The general merit of our correspondent's idea, however, is not vitally, or even materially, affected by this result; only, means should be provided for the neutralisation of the muriatic acid, or chloride of hydrogen, formed in the decomposition of the sulphuretted hydrogen by means of chlorine; indeed, even though chloride of sulphur were formed instead, so active and noxious an agent would have still required neutralization, being in fact a sort of acid itself, like sulphuric acid, only with chlorine instead of oxygen as its acidifying agent. It must have been kept in view, in that event, however, that were the chlorine in solution, the water of solution would have at once decomposed the chloride of sulphur, its hydrogen passing to the chlorine, and its oxygen to the sulphur, so that with the use of such a solution, the result would have still contained muriatic acid.]

SIR,—Permit me to suggest to your correspondents, who are proposing various plans for neutralizing the poisonous gases which are evolved from the soil in drains, that they had better consider the means of prevention than those of cure. If we had a constant strong stream of water through every street drain, we should not be troubled with poisonous gases. Water-works, a mile above Maidenhead Bridge, might, by means of pipes carried along the side of the Great Western Railway to Kensal Green, and thence across the North Western Railway to Highgate, supply a reservoir on the high ground above London with water enough to flood all London.

I am, Sir, &c.,

N. R.

Temple, May 10, 1847.

With reference to Abate's registered trap for the gullies of sewers, noticed in a recent number of our journal, a correspondent suggests, that the atmospheric pressure upon the surface of the water, as well as on the sphere, would tend to fix the sphere so firmly on the outlet, that it would be raised with difficulty even by the hand.

## RAILWAY JOTTINGS.

THE Railway Department expenses in the present session are estimated at 11,966*l.*; out of which the three commissioners enjoy salaries,—the first, Mr. Strutt, of 20,000*l.*, and the other two, Mr. Ryan and Major Brandereth, of 1,500*l.* each; the secretary, Mr. Bruce, one of 1,000*l.*; the head of the statistical and topographical department, Captain Harness, one of 800*l.*; and the two inspectors in the engineer department, Captains Coddington and Simmons, salaries of 600*l.* and 400*l.*—It has been decided in the Court of Exchequer, in re Midland Great Western Irish Railway v. Gordon, that an allottee is liable to pay the calls or shares which he has sold in the event of the purchaser of the shares neglecting to register. But, as remarked by a correspondent of the *Sheffield Iris*, the companies seem to consider that whilst the allottee is bound to pay,—the purchaser, notwithstanding his *laches*, is still the owner, and they accordingly refuse to hand over the scrip to the allottee, whose name they have placed on their register. It is a question of some interest, therefore, whether there be any decision which limits or defines the rights of the purchaser of scrip, who thus throws his liabilities on the shoulders of another, in whose shoes he at the same time, to all profitable intents and purposes, nevertheless stands.

The extraordinary discrepancies and deviations in statement and counter statement, respecting the progress of the atmospheric system, which have hitherto perplexed the impartial chronicler of events, appear at length to have reached their terminus, so far, at least, as regards the Croydon atmospheric, which the directors of the London, Brighton, and South Coast line, are now reported to have "definitively abandoned." "A portion of the atmospheric pipes at the Croydon end of the line," says a contemporary, "have already been taken up, and the work of destruction is rapidly going on." The decision is said to